

Marshmallow

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Clinical Value of Marshmallow Esophagography in Detecting Esophageal Dysmotility

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Background/Aims: We reported previously that marshmallow esophagography was more sensitive than conventional esophagography in evaluation of esophageal symptoms. To verify our previous study, we have investigated the clinical value of marshmallow esophagography in detecting esophageal dysmotility. **Methods:** Seventy-eight symptomatic patients who showed no organic disorders on esophagoscopy or conventional esophagography underwent esophageal manometry and marshmallow esophagography within one week. Forty-one of the patients also underwent esophageal transit scintigraphy. Marshmallow transit was considered normal when it passed the esophagus within 30 seconds on the supine position. Abnormal marshmallow transit was graded as mild, moderate, and severe. **Results:** The results of esophageal manometry were normal in 30 of 52 (57.7%) subjects with normal marshmallow transit, whereas the results were abnormal in 19 of 26 (73.1%) patients with abnormal marshmallow transit ($\chi^2=5.405$, $p=0.02$). The grade of marshmallow transit was correlated to the degree of esophageal dysmotility manometrically ($\chi^2=7.588$, $p<0.01$). The percentage of abnormal marshmallow transit was significantly higher in patients with achalasia, diffuse esophageal spasm, or non-specific esophageal motility disorder than in normal subjects. The grade of marshmallow transit was correlated with the scintigraphic residual fractions. **Conclusions:** These findings support that marshmallow esophagography would be useful as one of good functional methods for detecting esophageal dysmotility. (**Kor J Gastroenterol 2000;35:405 - 412**)

Key Words: Marshmallow esophagography, Esophageal dysmotility

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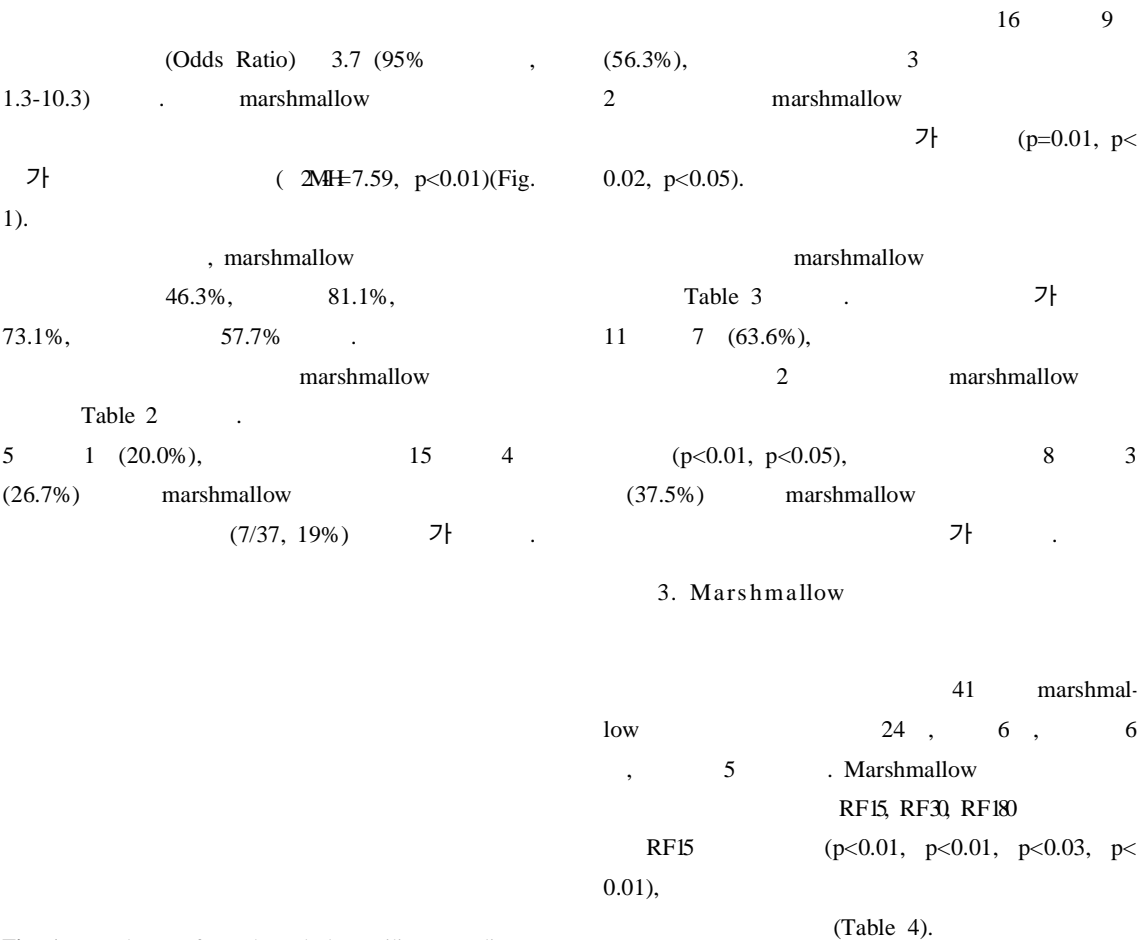


Fig. 1. Prevalence of esophageal dysmotility according to the grade of marshmallow transit. The higher the grade of marshmallow transit, the larger the proportion of esophageal dysmotility manometrically ($\chi^2=7.588$, $p=0.006$).

Table 2. Comparison of Marshmallow Esophagography according to the Manometric Diagnosis in Patients with Esophageal Symptoms (n=78)

Manometric diagnosis	No. of subjects	Grade of marshmallow transit				No. of abnormal transit (%)
		Normal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Normal motility	37	30	4	2	1	7 (18.9)
Hypertensive lower esophageal sphincter	5	4	0	1	0	1 (20.0)
Nutcracker esophagus	15	11	2	2	0	4 (26.7)
Non-specific esophageal motility disorder	16	7	3	3	3	9 (56.3)*
Diffuse esophageal spasm	3	0	1	1	1	3 (100)*
Achalasia	2	0	0	0	2	2 (100)*

* $p<0.05$, compared to normal motility subjects by Fisher's exact test.

Table 3. Comparison of Marshmallow Esophagography according to the Manometric Abnormality in Patients with Non-specific Esophageal Motility Disorder (n=16*)

Manometric abnormality	No. of subjects	Grade of marshmallow transit				No. of abnormal transit (%)
		Normal	Mild	Moderate	Severe	
Isolated incomplete LES relaxation	2	0	1	0	1	2 (100) †
Non-transmitted contraction (>20% of WS)	11	4	2	3	2	7 (63.6) †
Low-amplitude contraction (<30 mmHg)	8	5	1	2	0	3 (37.5)

LES, lower esophageal sphincter; WS, wet swallows.

* 5 patients had combined abnormality of non-transmitted contraction and low-amplitude contraction.

† p<0.05, compared to normal motility subjects by Fisher's exact test.

Table 4. Correlation between Esophageal Transit assessed by Marshmallow and Scintigraphy in 41 Patients with Esophageal Symptoms

Grade of marsh-mallow transit	No. of subjects	Liquid meal			Semi-solid meal		
		RF15 _{sec}	RF30 _{sec}	RF180 _{sec}	RF15 _{sec}	RF30 _{sec}	RF180 _{sec}
Normal	24	13.4 ± 2.4	11.6 ± 1.7	5.0 ± 0.7	14.4 ± 2.0	11.6 ± 1.7	2.6 ± 0.3
Mild	6	15.1 ± 2.7	16.3 ± 3.9	6.2 ± 1.0	26.5 ± 8.3	12.7 ± 3.6	2.7 ± 0.8
Moderate	6	30.7 ± 10.2	27.5 ± 10.7	6.9 ± 2.0	29.8 ± 3.5	23.9 ± 6.4	6.6 ± 3.3
Severe	5	41.4 ± 12.3*	33.6 ± 13.7*	19.0 ± 6.9*	46.3 ± 2.0 †	21.8 ± 7.0	4.1 ± 1.6
Spearman's r		0.496	0.419	0.320	0.651	0.292	0.223
p value		0.001	0.004	0.027	0.000	0.064	0.145

RF, residual fraction of radioisotope on scintigraphy, are expressed as mean ± standard error (%).

* p<0.05.

† p<0.01, compared to normal grade by Kruskal-Wallis test with Dunn's multiple comparison test.

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